Applicant (Agency and address)			**Proposed Date of Completion:** December 2012 (or 24 months after notice to proceed)
Sacramento Area Council of Governments 1415 L Street, 300 Sacramento, CA 95814	**Check one**		**Grant Amount Requested:** $750,000
	City		**If Joint Proposal, list participating entities/contact person**
	County		
	MPO	**X**	Not Applicable - no joint partnership
	COG		
	RTPA		
	JPA		
	Joint		

Lead Applicant's Name: Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)

Title of Proposal
Intergrating and Implementing the Sustainable Communities Strategy and the Rural Urban Connections Strategy

Applicant's Representative Authorized in Resolution		**Person with Day to Day Responsibility for Plan** (if different from the Authorized Representative)	
Name	Mike McKeever	**Name**	David Shabazian
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Check all of the following that are incorporated or applicable to the proposal

Focus Area		**Program Objectives**	
	Focus Area #1	**X**	Applying for 20% EDC set aside
X	Focus Area #2		
	Focus Area #3	**X**	Improve air and water quality
Eligibility Requirements (Mandatory)		**X**	Promote public health
X	Consistent with State Planning Priorities	**X**	Promote equity
X	Reduces GHG emissions on a permanent basis	**X**	Increase affordable housing
X	Collaboration requirement	**X**	Increase infill and compact developments
Priority Considerations		**X**	Revitalize urban and community centers
X	Demonstrates collaboration & community involvement	**X**	Protect natural resources and agricultural lands
X	Addresses climate change impacts	**X**	Reduce automobile usage and fuel consumption
X	Serves as best practices	**X**	Improve infrastructure systems
X	Leverages additional resources	**X**	Promote water conservation
X	Serves an economically disadvantaged community	**X**	Promote energy efficiency and conservation
X	Serves a severely disadvantaged community	**X**	Strengthen the economy

I certify that the information contained in this plan application, including required attachments, is complete and accurate

Signature  8/31/2010

Applicant's Authorized Representative as shown in Resolution — Date

Print Name and Title: Mike McKeever, Executive Director

Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)

INTEGRATING AND IMPLEMENTING THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES STRATEGY AND THE RURAL-URBAN CONNECTIONS STRATEGY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sacramento region has a vision for sustainable communities that promotes equity, strengthens the economy, protects the environment, and promotes safety and health. However, the region faces severe challenges in all of these areas. This application proposes to address these issues through its regional greenprint (Rural-Urban Connections Strategy) for rural sustainability, Blueprint for smart growth and land use, and its Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy.

From an environmental standpoint, as the region remains one of the fastest-growing areas of the state, it cannot be sustainable if it continues to sprawl outward. The lack of physical growth boundaries puts pressure on the urban-rural edge that threatens the conservation of farm land and environmental services it provides. From an equity standpoint, our farms help feed the world, but fresh food access is still an issue for many local communities. From an economic standpoint, the region contains many economically disadvantaged communities that face high levels of unemployment and poverty. Rural communities in particular are dependent on keeping agricultural land in production.

We will build on three existing frameworks. The Blueprint is the region's sustainability framework. The MTP makes transportation investments based on land uses. The Rural-Urban Connections Strategy, RUCS, project is the framework for rural economic and environmental sustainability.

The Sacramento region is ambitiously planning and building sustainable communities, from the core of downtown Sacramento to the rural edges of the region. To complement Blueprint implementation successes to date, SACOG is proposing work activities that address the same goals of Senate Bill 375 and Assembly Bill 32, through creating economically, environmentally, and equitably sustainable rural communities that directly and indirectly have land use benefits throughout the entire region.

Work Scope

The majority of the work proposed will help us accelerate work on the Rural-Urban Connections Strategy, while the other work activities will help us expand on Blueprint to address more urban transportation and land use needs. Combined, the implementation of Blueprint and RUCS can help achieve the goals of the program. We will also coordinate with the other large MPOs in the state on these activities and others outside of this scope.

1. Rural-Urban Sustainability and Food Access Assessment
    a) Assess the opportunities to improve health and capitalize on new local food markets through understanding the unmet demand for healthy locally grown food
    b) Determine needs for agriculture infrastructure to enhance the viability of agricultural lands in the region
    c) Identify needs to support adequate agricultural labor in the region
    d) Determine housing needs for agricultural labor
    e) Determine infrastructure and service needs for rural communities and estimate the cost and sources of revenue
2. Policies, Strategies and Monitoring Activities to Protect Agricultural Lands and Improve Farm-to-Market Travel
3. I-80/Capitol Corridor Strategic Plan: A Regional Planning Initiative between the Sacramento Region and the San Francisco Bay Area
4. CEQA Streamlining/Tiering
5. Public Outreach & Visualization

In addition to the work products for each work activity, we will develop a number of indicators that help us measure the effectiveness of these activities.

Sacramento Area Council of Governments
Integrating and Implementing the Sustainable Communities Strategy and Rural-Urban Connections Strategy

Introduction

The Sacramento region is ambitiously planning and building sustainable communities, from the core of downtown Sacramento to the rural edges of the region. To further this work, SACOG is proposing work activities that address the same goals of Senate Bill 375 and AB 32, through creating economically, environmentally, and equitably sustainable rural communities that directly and indirectly have land use benefits throughout the entire region.

In 2004, SACOG adopted a Blueprint land use vision, which established principles for how the region grows through 2050. In 2008, SACOG started the Rural-Urban Connections Strategy (RUCS), the region's greenprint, which looks at the economic issues of the region. Without strategies for containing urban growth, the vast rural portions of our region are susceptible to development pressures. The Blueprint and RUCS are complementary efforts to encourage smart growth and preserve open space and agricultural lands. The majority of the work proposed will help us accelerate work on the RUCS project, while the other work activities will help us address urban transportation, land use and social equity objectives, as well as rural housing needs. Combined, the implementation of Blueprint and RUCS can help achieve the goals of the Sustainable Communities program.

The Need

Over the past decade, the Sacramento region has moved onto the leading edge in the nation in the type of regional-scale, integrated, inclusive planning that is central to sustainable communities that promote equity, strengthen the economy, protect the environment, and promote safe, healthy communities. The region is second in line to adopt a new Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) meeting the requirements of Senate Bill 375, including much more extensive linkage to the Regional Housing Needs Plan (RHNP), a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) that specifically shows how and where housing and employment opportunities for all segments of society will be located, and comprehensive analysis of the impacts of the SCS on agricultural and natural resource lands.

The Sacramento region faces a severe economic challenge. The region's unemployment rate of 12.3 percent is well above the national average and shows no near-term signs of improving. The region's economy is very dependent on the fiscal health of the state government: public sector jobs represent 26 percent of the region's workforce, versus 16 percent statewide. Public sector salary cuts, furloughs and layoffs that are becoming commonplace in state and local governments disproportionately affect the region. The state's $20 billion deficit directly impacts local residents—state furloughs alone are projected to result in the loss of 4,100 private sector jobs in Sacramento County and reduced state worker transit ridership is contributing to the crisis in transit operating costs.

We cannot be sustainable if we continue to sprawl outward. For decades, large-lot homes dominated the housing market. Historic growth patterns encouraged large lots throughout the edges of the region. The length and number of car trips from these homes has increased, leading to steady increases in congestion. Evidence is mounting that more compact development in the underutilized lands between the urban center and these large lot homes can help reduce the number and length of car trips in this region. The region has also noted a dramatic rate for childhood obesity in several of these same older suburban neighborhoods surrounding the urban core. The Sacramento region's childhood obesity rate is 270/1000 according to California Department of Education's 2008-2009 California Physical Fitness Report. The rates are even higher for the region's Hispanic (371/1000), African American (326/1000), and Native American (377/1000) populations. Many of these older suburban neighborhoods still have vacant land available for more compact development.

The region remains one of the fastest-growing areas of the state. Despite the magnitude of its challenges, the region has many assets that will help it create a bright future. Population forecasts completed this year still show a projected 47 percent increase in population by 2035—much higher than the 25-28 percent projected in the other three largest metropolitan areas in the state. The region is unique from other major population centers in the state, with its mix of highly urbanized and rural areas. Some of the world's most productive farmland covers 52 percent of the land area, national and private forest lands comprise 28 percent, and all rural, suburban and urban development only 13 percent. Rural, suburban and urban economies and settlement patterns are fully represented in the region. The Sacramento region is ethnically diverse and frequently mentioned as being a microcosm of the country. In 2002, *Time* magazine ran a cover story proclaiming Sacramento the nation's most diverse city.

The direct and tangible benefits of the Blueprint and MTP form a foundation for a better economic future for the region, reducing infrastructure costs by $16 billion through 2050, increasing choice and reducing the cost of housing, bringing jobs and housing closer together, providing future residents with far more choices to travel by transit, walking, bicycling and shorter auto trips, and significantly reducing per capita criteria pollutant and greenhouse gas tailpipe emissions.

The region's housing needs allocation and planning need further alignment. The results of the housing analysis proposed in this application will directly inform and impact SACOG's next state-mandated Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). Cities and counties are required to adopt housing elements for their general plans that provide sufficient development opportunity to accommodate their share of the regional housing needs allocation. SB 375 now adds the requirement that the Regional Housing Needs Plan (RHNP) be consistent with the SCS. The new RHNA methodology must be adopted by December 2011, the same time as the SCS in the MTP. This creates a unique opportunity to deeply align state, regional and local land use and housing plans.

Our farms help feed the world, but fresh food access is still an issue for many communities. The region annually produces over 3.4 million tons of food; however, most of this is exported to markets throughout the state, nation and world. Approximately 2.2 million tons of food is consumed in this region, but less than 2 percent of that food comes from local sources. This imbalance generates truck trips that contribute heavily to congestion and vehicle emissions. Efforts to better link regional production with consumption can reduce truck travel and create economic opportunity in aggregation, distribution and processing, which currently mostly occurs outside of our region. What food does stay in our region misses many of our lower-income communities? There is a strong correlation between these areas and food deserts, according to a study of Sacramento County. These issues and others have precipitated a series of workshops hosted by SACOG through our RUCS project, where stakeholders provided feedback about innovative ideas to expand the locally serving agricultural economy in the region. Through this effort and others, the region is poised to implement strategies that will support farmers and rural communities, and increase the economic activity related to the agriculture industry.

The potential to feed populations inside and outside our region is dependent on keeping agricultural land in production. The Blueprint growth strategy is projected to reduce the total consumption of urban land by 357 square miles. Much of this savings is agricultural land that has an annual crop value of approximately $100 million and total economic value of more than $200 million (crop value plus the value of economic activity related to agriculture production). The agricultural sector has recently been one of the few bright spots in the SACOG region's economy, with annual crop economic value increasing from $1.3 billion in 2006 to $1.6 billion in 2008. The total economic value of the region's agriculture industry is estimated at $3.3 billion and creates more than 28,000 jobs. Expanding the local food system, particularly in communities with little or no access to fresh food, is not only good for public health, it provides new market opportunities for local farmers and food distributors and processors, thereby expanding economic activity and jobs in the region.

As a region with no physical growth boundaries, pressures on the urban-rural edge threaten the environment. Improved management of the urban-rural interface, through agricultural land conservation, habitat conservation plans, focused development in TPAs, and stronger connections between agricultural producers and consumers in the region's homes, schools and restaurants are needed to find the win-win solutions necessary to protect valuable natural resources, provide shelter for workers near regional jobs centers, and preserve and grow our regional economies.

The Blueprint is the region's sustainability framework. After community leaders saw a prospective future of worsening congestion and air quality, as well as significant population growth, they came together with SACOG, Valley Vision and other regional organizations to facilitate a community-driven visioning process that involved over 5,000 residents from start to finish. Unanimously adopted by the SACOG board (comprised of elected officials from every city and county in the region) in 2004, most jurisdictions are voluntarily implementing the Blueprint as they update their general plans, zoning codes, and infrastructure plans. The Blueprint formed the basis for the land uses in the MTP.

The MTP makes transportation investments based on land uses. The current MTP, adopted by the SACOG board in 2008, has a land use pattern substantially consistent with Blueprint principles, including: improving housing and transportation choices, promoting compact development, a mix of uses, use of existing resources and quality design, and protecting natural resources. While the land use element of the MTP is largely influenced by, and based on, the 2050 Blueprint, there are areas where it falls a little short, most notably in the area of future housing product mix. The Blueprint projects that 68 percent of future housing will be in a small-lot single-family or attached format through 2050, while the MTP shows 60 percent of the housing through 2035 in these alternative formats.

The RUCS project is the framework for rural economic and environmental sustainability. Just as Blueprint was, in essence, an economic development strategy for urban areas, RUCS is an economic development strategy for rural areas.

Similar to Blueprint, cutting-edge data and modeling capacity has been developed to analyze rural land use and economic activity, which is mainly agriculture. The project therefore is focused on ways to enhance agricultural viability while also keeping an eye toward the environmental sustainability of these areas. Working with rural and urban stakeholders, SACOG is developing strategies to help both production agriculture—the mainstay of our rural economies—and local agriculture, which is a fast-growing niche with the potential to reduce energy use, create new employment opportunities, and feed underserved communities with fresh food. Viable agriculture also supports small rural communities, which often struggle to maintain jobs and in many cases become bedroom communities that must grow in order to cover ongoing municipal infrastructure and service costs. The combination of Blueprint, RUCS and the MTP is another step toward comprehensive planning that balances the entire region's needs.

The region's integrated planning results in unparalleled performance. The projected decreases in per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and greenhouse gas emissions put this plan in a very rare class in the country. This was possible almost exclusively because of the purposeful, detailed integration of smart growth land use patterns and transportation investments. This linkage is important if the region is going to meet its goals for reducing congestion, VMT, and most importantly, greenhouse gas emissions. By bringing essential land uses such as housing, offices, retail and services closer together, residents can shorten their travel trips and have broad transportation choices including bicycling, walking and transit. The draft passenger vehicle greenhouse gas emission regional targets just released by the Air Resources Board staff assign to SACOG the highest target by 2035 of any of the state's 18 regions—and the Sacramento region is determined to meet or beat that target.

Implementation of the MTP increasingly links performance to funding decisions. In the last two years, SACOG has been through five major rounds of programming transportation funds for specific projects, resulting in more than $240 million in regional investments. In each case, we have made tangible strides towards specifically linking the principles and performance criteria in the MTP to the funding decisions. Projects selected by the SACOG board for priority funding have been those that can demonstrate strong performance outcomes, such as reduced VMT, increased alternatives to driving alone, improved safety, and focused goods movement investments, including farm-to-market travel. The recession has also led to placing an even greater emphasis on the most cost-effective projects and prioritizing transit operations and fix-it-first road rehabilitation investments that help the regional transportation system maintain a state of good repair.

Coordination among four largest MPOs. There are inherent challenges to the implementation of SB 375. By securing funds from the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant and Incentive Program, and directing resources to targeted initiatives, some of these challenges would be addressed. As a result of collaborative efforts, the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) from San Diego, Los Angeles, Bay Area and Sacramento regions have jointly identified four (4) major focus areas which, when completed, would address several issues which present challenges to the local and regional implementation of SB 375. These four categories of task are identified as follows:

- Category 1: SCS Performance Assessment—including indicators useful for the Sustainable Communities Planning Program Objectives
- Category 2: MegaRegional Planning—including the San Francisco and Sacramento Regional Planning Initiative
- Category 3: CEQA Streamlining/Tiering—including determining "Local Projects" Consistency with the SCS
- Category 4: Public Outreach for the Regional Transportation Plan—including community outreach and visualization techniques

Critical to successful implementation of SB 375 is the development of a coordinated approach to issues of regional and statewide concern. As such, a key component embedded in each of the above-referenced tasks is the development of coordinated and synergist efforts between the MPOs. Each of the tasks provides multiple opportunities for collaboration between the MPOs themselves and their respective cities and counties. There is additional value added to presenting a unified approach to addressing the implementation issues pertaining to SB 375, as this type of approach would better serve the desired outcome. Funding of coordinated activities greatly enhances the ability of each of the MPOs to carry out tasks that result in the successful implementation of SB 375.

Work Scope

SACOG's Blueprint project, while inclusive of the full region, was finely focused on urban centers and the opportunities for improvement on key transportation performance indicators. More fully realizing the benefits to VMT and GHG through land use, must balance the needs and sustainability of both our urban and rural communities equally. The proposed RUCS

related work activities in this application focus on enhancing the viability of agriculture, which is the primary land use and economic activity in rural areas. Rural economic viability is an important part of implementing the Blueprint, as owners of profitable agricultural lands have less incentive to give up those lands for development. Strategies that help keep rural lands open are also critical to implementing the Blueprint principle of protecting natural resources and help us meet or beat the aggressive ARB draft passenger vehicle greenhouse gas emissions regional targets for 2035. This proposal goes a step further and addresses issues concerning social equity and economic opportunity considerations. These activities complement the four categories of collaboration with the state's largest MPOs.

Work Activity #1: Rural-Urban Sustainability and Food Access Assessment

We will enhance the Rural-Urban Connections Strategy (RUCS) by analyzing food accessibility and evaluating local food consumption, distribution and routes-to-market, processing, labor supply and the protection of agriculture lands.

Task 1a: Assess the opportunities to improve health through understanding the unmet demand for healthy locally grown food

According to the Department of Education's California Physical Fitness Report, our region had childhood obesity rates over 27 percent during the 2008-2009 school year. A better understanding of how to connect market demand for healthy food to farmers and ranchers who can then sell their products locally can help address this crisis. Currently, the best information on per capita food consumption is provided by the USDA; however, these profiles are national and do not capture differences in regional diet, especially in areas like the Sacramento region with great ethnic diversity. They also do not capture diet profiles that are affected by public health initiatives or high levels of participation in WIC or school food programs. Furthermore, trends in food consumption (e.g., seasonal eating, less meat consumption) are not represented in the USDA's data. Understanding these trends and community diets helps to more accurately determine food demand today and establish a baseline for public health organization to assess needs to improve diet, health, access, and equity.

The six-county Sacramento region is home to a productive and diverse agriculture industry. This task will inform growers about new local market opportunities by assessing the demand for food in a number of communities using public health and nutrition diet surveys designed and applied by a selected consultant. It will also help public health organizations by providing needed data on the consumption patterns in a number of communities. The survey will include valid samples for block groups that meet disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged income criteria and SACOG's environmental justice criteria, based on ethnicity and income. Survey results on the amount and type of food will be applied to similar communities to derive a regional demand for food. Consumption trends will be used to estimate regional food demand, which growers can use to determine market opportunities.

A second part of this task will study food deserts and food imbalance areas of our region to identify where healthy food outlets are most needed. Food deserts are defined as "areas characterized by relatively poor access to healthy and affordable food" and may contribute to "social disparities in diet and diet-related health outcomes, such as cardiovascular disease and obesity" (Beaulac, Krisjansson, Cummings 2009). Food imbalance areas tend to have concentrations of fast food outlets, but limited access to healthy and affordable food. This task will develop a process to monitor the ratio of food deserts and food imbalance areas when our region's SCS is updated every four years. These tools will assist our region's economic development departments to fund new food access locations with funding that may come through legislation such as AB 2720 (Pérez).

This task will leverage work SACOG has completed building parcel-level analysis tools for our SCS. The RUCS project has completed farm budgets and pro forma analysis for small, local-serving farms. SACOG will develop a methodology quantifying food deserts and food imbalance areas in our region with the assistance of advisors from local planning and public health departments. The 5-year average 2005-2009 ACS data available this December will be used to update locations of disadvantaged, severely disadvantaged, and environmental justice populations in our region. Additional data will be collected where available to highlight other characteristics such as obesity rates, heart disease, diabetes and other health measures.

SACOG's parcel-level employment data will map locations that sell healthy food to identify food deserts and map locations of fast food that can signify areas of food imbalance. SACOG's parcel-level accessibility measurement tools will provide parcel level estimates assessed for distances to healthy food sources. Areas where healthy food is more than 0.62 miles (considered a comfortable distance for walking or bicycling in a 2010 pilot study done for parts of Sacramento County)

from a market is considered a food desert. The project advisors will help develop appropriate ratios for food access and food imbalance for both urban and rural areas that identify where new food outlets are needed.

Work Products:

1. Survey of diet profiles for various community groups
2. Food desert profiles and maps and methodology report
3. Regional food consumption summary, including type and amount of food
4. Food production and land needs for various levels of food sourced for local growers with maps of where farmers market opportunities exist

Task 1b: Determine needs for agriculture infrastructure to support more locally consumed food.

Throughout the RUCS project, stakeholders have discussed how more agricultural infrastructure can support and enhance agriculture in the region. Agricultural infrastructure includes facilities where farm products can be aggregated, processed and distributed. Much of this capacity has left the region over the last 20 years. The effect of this has been more and longer truck travel to move product to markets resulting in increased congestion and worsening air quality. Loss of this infrastructure has also affected the kinds of crops grown in the region due to the loss of markets. This has reduced employment opportunities in rural areas where these facilities were located. Examples of this effect include the loss of tomato processing followed by a nearly 50 percent reduction of tomato production. The local peach industry has followed a similar pattern, first losing processing facilities and then reducing acreage of peach orchards. Facilities that aggregate, store and distribute local food are essential for serving the local fresh food market. This region has virtually no such facilities, making us dependent on refrigerated trucks delivering food from aggregation points far outside of the region. This agriculture infrastructure is important for large production agriculture, but is critical for establishing a successful local food system. With new or expanded agriculture infrastructure in the region, both production and local agriculture can expand. These facilities also help to stabilize and grow rural economies that are based in truly unique assets: our Mediterranean climate and world-class soils. This infrastructure will also directly help improve food access by making more fresh and processed food available for local communities.

Agricultural crop production in our region is directly related to market signals from distributors and processors. Assessment of local demand for fresh produce as well as processing opportunities for larger market distribution represent opportunities to improve economic viability on rural lands in our region. This task will start with an assessment of the agricultural infrastructure inside and outside the region. The assessment will include historical data on distribution and processing facility locations to determine possible correlations with cropping patterns in the region. This assessment also provides a starting point for understanding the aggregation, storage, processing, and distribution capacity that will be needed to fully support maximum production opportunities for local growers.

Once an inventory of facilities is assembled, the region can determine what new or expanded infrastructure is needed to support a local food system. This requires preliminary analysis of the scale and feasibility of these facilities. Another important part of this task is developing business models and pro forma analysis tools to help growers and economic development organizations plan for expanded and new agriculture infrastructure. These tools will support feasibility studies and provide guidance for where the region should concentrate funding and policy efforts. Coupling market assessment information from task 1a with these assessment tools and identifying regulatory and permitting requirements will be an essential part of the feasibility studies. This project will collect and assemble information to provide preliminary level pro forma metrics for determining which infrastructure components are economically feasible. This will help local public and private organizations to do more detailed feasibility analysis.

Work Products:

1. Inventory of historical and current processing and distribution facilities
2. Assessment of facilities that can be supported given type and volume of crops produced in the region
3. Estimation of cropping patterns and land supply needed to support various levels of infrastructure capacity
4. Preliminary level pro forma tools
5. Estimates of employment needs to support various levels of infrastructure

Task 1c: Identify needs to support adequate agricultural labor in the region

Agricultural labor supply in the region has been an ongoing challenge. This is a critical part of the agricultural infrastructure, as supply shortages sometimes result in crops being left in the field, and can drive up labor costs, reducing profitability. For some crops, farmers can replace labor with equipment, but for many crops, labor is a critical component of the production process. This is particularly true for small farms serving the local market, as their scale necessitates more hand planting and harvesting than mechanized production. Therefore, it is important to attract and maintain adequate agriculture labor supply. Finding ways to support agricultural workers will increase our ability to secure their services.

One way to support agricultural workers is to provide safe and reliable transportation services. Recent surveys conducted for SACOG's Agricultural Worker Transportation Program (AWTP) found that much of the region's labor supply comes from outside of our boundaries. While the transportation program is providing vanpool services for some farm workers, there are still many that enter and leave the region in their own vehicles, which is a cost to the worker and an impact on rural roads and air quality. The average farm worker in the region travels 40 to 50 miles per day based on survey data, and many of these trips are in unsafe vehicles. In response to the need for safe, reliable transportation, SACOG is implementing a AWTP pilot program and will need to start looking at a funding model to keep this service operating past the second year. In order to assess the implementation of AWTP and look to develop a monitoring program to measure the performance of the program. The monitoring program will then help staff and stakeholders design the funding model that will fund the continued service.

Another important agricultural labor issue is the availability of services in addition to housing to support workers and their families. The housing issues are addressed in task 1d; however, in this task, we will research other types of services, including education, healthcare and retail access, that help make up functioning communities. SACOG will study best practices of successful agricultural labor communities to document cost effective solution to meet the needs for agricultural workers.

Work Products:

1. Performance measures to monitor the implementation of the Agricultural Worker Transportation Program
2. Development of funding strategies to support the continuation of the Agricultural Worker Transportation Program, and a needs assessment for potential expansions of the program in the future
3. Gap Report on needs for Agricultural Worker Supportive Programs

Task 1d: Determine housing needs for agricultural labor

Tasks 1b and 1c identify needs and opportunities to expand agriculture infrastructure in the region. This infrastructure either is farm labor or facilities that require labor to operate. Commensurate with expanding agricultural infrastructure is the need to expand the availability and types of housing for agricultural labor. Using a crop map developed for the RUCS project and UC Cooperative Extension studies of labor needs by crop type, we estimate that there is demand for approximately 6,000 farm workers annually. Using U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis multipliers, there is demand for roughly another 21,000 jobs related to pre- and post-agriculture production (e.g., suppliers and processors). An increase in the number of small farms to meet local market demand as well as aggregation, storage, processing and distribution infrastructure will require even more labor. Improving housing affordability would improve the opportunities for balancing jobs and housing in urban areas, reduce travel time and associated VMT and potentially increase availability of a steady supply of labor throughout the year.

For this activity, SACOG will leverage the crop map and model that have been developed for the RUCS project to estimate labor demand related to crop production. This analysis will determine where there are current or potential future concentrations of labor demand and how much. This will be particularly important with respect to the needs of small farm operations that produce food for the local market. SACOG will also use labor estimates derived from the infrastructure analysis conducted in task 1c to determine current and future labor needs. Possible changes in the types and scale of agricultural infrastructure will inform where and how much labor is needed in each season. Reports on SACOG's estimates will help housing and transportation planners better understand the temporal location of our region's agricultural labor. These farm and infrastructure labor concentrations along with proximity to small communities, schools, medical facilities and roads will be used to inform agencies that plan for agriculture worker housing. Planning, economic development, and rural housing agencies will be engaged in this work and able to use this information to conduct more detailed assessments and plans for rural housing.

Work Products:

1. Estimate number of farm laborers needed and location of that demand for current cropping patterns as well as for scenarios of possible future cropping patterns
2. Estimate labor needs for current and possible future levels of agriculture infrastructure in the region
3. Estimate number, type and location of housing units needed to accommodate current and future laborers
4. Assess the capacity of existing housing plan to meet the identified housing needs for laborers

Task 1e: Determine infrastructure and service needs for rural communities and estimate the cost and sources of revenue

Small communities often originated as agriculturally based towns that today also appeal to those seeking a slower pace of life. However, many of these communities are having trouble maintaining that way of life, as road, sewer and water infrastructure needs challenge their fiscal capacity. Maintenance of public swimming pools, emergency services, wastewater treatment, and clean water requirements are significant infrastructure and service costs. Additionally, residents leave town for shopping, professional services, and employment, thereby increasing travel and the congestion and air quality impacts that go with it. They also leave much of their tax dollars in the coffers of other communities.

These infrastructure and service needs, and revenue shortfalls often leave small communities feeling forced to pursue new development in order to pay for infrastructure improvements and add enough housing units to attract commercial and professional services. This development, however, often consumes and impacts much of the agricultural land that creates the base economy for many of these communities, creates more traffic from long distance commuting to regional job centers, and diminishes the small-town character. Furthermore, new housing in these communities is often too costly for agricultural laborers that work in the area.

As part of the RUCS project, SACOG has developed an infrastructure cost and fiscal analysis model to assist rural communities with planning and economic development decisions. This model analyzes the needs and cost of municipal infrastructure and service and ongoing operation and maintenance cost, and then compares those costs to a calculation of municipal revenue from development. It was built with the assistance of rural communities throughout the region and they have expressed interest in applying to model to analyze upcoming planning efforts.

For this activity, SACOG will continue to work with rural communities to incorporate the infrastructure model into the I-PLACE^{3}S land use model so that communities, in one modeling platform, can test performance not only in terms of jobs/housing yield and balance, travel behavior, and infrastructure needs with ability to compare infrastructure cost to available revenues. SACOG will also work with rural communities on tasks 1c and 1d related to this proposal. This work will benefit assessment of infrastructure needs and cost for labor housing and services, particularly where this housing may be beyond the service area of a rural community. This tool and analysis will help rural communities, as well as county planning, economic development, and housing agencies plan for infrastructure and housing to meet current and future agricultural industry needs.

Work Products:

1. I-PLACE^{3}S model update with an infrastructure cost and fiscal analysis module
2. Work with rural communities, counties and housing agencies to assess infrastructure needs, costs and municipal revenues for rural communities and other locations where agricultural facilities and labor housing may be sited

Work Activity #1 Indicators

Task 1a will improve air quality by reducing automobile usage and fuel consumption to purchase healthy food. It promotes public health and promotes equity by improving the diet choices of people living in areas with poor food access or food imbalance. The activity increases housing affordability by reducing the transportation costs for accessing healthy food. This will also help protect natural resources and agricultural lands by increasing demand for locally grown food, making agriculture lands more economically viable and less prone to develop. Task 1b will improve infrastructure systems for the agriculture industry by identifying needs for expanded and new aggregation, storage, processing, and distribution capacity. New infrastructure capacity will be a critical part of a local food system that promotes public health and will strengthen the regional economy by creating jobs and capturing within the region more of the value-added process for food. Sustaining and expanding the agriculture industry will protect natural resources and agricultural lands. Task 1c promotes equity by providing

analysis of services needed for agricultural worker communities. Providing more transport services will help reduce automobile use and fuel consumption, improving air quality. Task 1d's better housing planning promotes equity for agricultural workers. This activity helps to protect natural resources and agricultural land by providing housing for workers needed to keep the agriculture in our region. Task 1e will improve municipal infrastructure in rural communities by identifying needs and costs with possible revenue sources. Working with communities to find more fiscally balanced ways to accommodate both housing and jobs will help reduce automobile use and fuel consumption and improve air quality. SACOG's modeling tools will help small communities promote infill and compact development, which will help protect natural resources and agricultural lands and reduce water consumption.

Work Activity #2: Policies, Strategies and Monitoring Activities to Protect Agricultural Lands and Improve Farm-to-Market Travel

Reducing VMT per household in the rural portions of the region supports the successful implementation of the Blueprint and SB 375. SACOG's transportation modeling shows that on average, non-agricultural rural residents (living on 1-10 acres) average 80 VMT per household, compared to an average of 30 VMT per households in urban areas. The impacts already present today will only increase in the future without focused action. General plan zoning for rural residential in the rural portions of the region include approximately 246,000 acres of existing rural housing, with the potential for another 337,000 acres of rural housing according to rural residential general plan designations. The capacity for additional rural housing in the region is anywhere between 28,000 (assuming 1 unit per existing parcel) and 67,000 housing units (assuming 1 unit per 5 acres).

Rural residential development negatively impacts rural roads and the agricultural economy as increases in auto trips conflicts with the movement of agricultural equipment, creating unsafe conditions and interrupting vital farm-to-market travel. If a significant portion of rural lands in the region continue to transition into non-agricultural uses, the network of rural county roads will experience higher traffic volumes then they are designed to accommodate. Rural transportation funding constraints are already severe so without policies and strategies to reduce the growth in auto VMT on rural roads, there will likely be accelerated road deterioration and even greater conflicts with agriculture activity.

The task will leverage work already completed through RUCS. The RUCS land use working group identified regionally relevant policies and strategies to protect farmland and/or open space from urbanization, while the RUCS transportation working group analyzed rural travel patterns, infrastructure needs and identified existing farm-to-market routes.

This activity will improve air quality and reduce fuel consumption by providing tools to plan for more efficient farm to market travel. The activity strengthens the economy by creating better farm to market access and focusing growth into existing urban communities. The activity also promotes public health and protects resources and natural resources and agricultural lands through promotion of the best practices toolkit.

Work Products and Indicators:

1. Toolkit of best practices and technical assistance for SACOG member agencies towards creating customized general plan and specific plan policies that protect farmland and/or open space, reduce VMT and protect the rural character of roadways
2. Performance measures to monitor the success of implemented policies and strategies that protect farmland and/or open space while directing growth to existing communities
3. A regional network of future priority farm-to-market routes and identification of critical infrastructure improvements needed on these routes in order to successfully connect producers to processing facilities and markets
4. Performance measures to monitor the success of improvements to the priority farm-to-market network, including road conditions, traffic volumes by vehicle type, safety, and access to processing facilities and markets
5. Calculation and analysis of deferred VMT benefits by local agency general plan policies in place or under consideration that promote compact development and preservation of agriculture and natural resource lands
6. Calculation and analysis of road rehabilitation and maintenance investment savings from reduced auto VMT on rural roadways. This analysis to be completed through use of the infrastructure cost and fiscal analysis module update to I-PLACE^{3}S, as described in Task 1c

Work Activity #3: I-80/Capitol Corridor Strategic Plan: A Regional Planning Initiative between the Sacramento Region and the San Francisco Bay Area

The work activity is a partnership between SACOG and the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). Efforts will address goods movement, land use strategies and interregional travel investment priorities.

SB 375 requires each regional agency to provide housing opportunities for all of the region's workers in the future and to no longer assume in- and out- commuting growth. If this is to be accomplished, policy coordination will need to continue along the Interstate 80 corridor connecting the Bay Area and Sacramento regions. With fast-growing exurban areas between the two regions and an estimated 125,000 daily interregional commute trips already, there is a need and opportunity to coordinate land use planning and transportation investments along the corridor. Additionally, the I-80/Capitol Corridor strategic plan and food access work will help identify strategic investments for specific goods and freight movement corridors to support the agriculture industry.

The task will leverage work already completed through a collaborative SACOG and MTC/ABAG effort in 2008 that resulted in the report, *Smarter Growth along the Interstate 80-Capitol Corridor.* This report included a market study, goods movement analysis, a comparison of regional growth and modeling forecasts, and travel demand analysis of various alternative growth scenarios along the corridor. At the end of the study the agencies agreed upon a series of recommendations, which will act as the foundation of the work proposed for this task. Consideration of the unique needs for moving agricultural goods will be included in this task.

This activity will improve air quality and reduce fuel consumption through a coordinated Strategic Plan to reduce VMT in the I-80 corridor. The activity protects resources and natural resources and agricultural lands, helps revitalize urban and community centers, and promotes infill and compact development through coordinated smart growth planning in the corridor.

<u>Work Products and Indicators:</u>

1. Data analysis and white paper to support the development of an eventual I-80/Capitol Corridor Strategic Plan that will address coordinated goods movement investments, strategies to reduce interregional commuter VMT, including smart growth land use policies along the corridor; and
2. Coordinate air quality, land use and travel demand assumptions and models for each region, including job and household formation rates, demographics, assumptions for travel analysis zones at the edge of each region, and assumptions for air quality and travel demand forecasting, including pricing and persons-per-vehicle.

Work Activity #4: CEQA Streamlining/Tiering

This work activity will help establish the process to determine if housing development projects are consistent with the SCS or Alternative Planning Scenario (APS) that meets the greenhouse gas emissions target for the SACOG region, and guide who should make the consistency determination. This is an issue that all MPOs in California must address.

SB 375 includes two types of streamlined CEQA review. One is for residential projects that are consistent with the SCS or APS prepared by the MPO, reviewed by ARB, and determined to be sufficient to achieve the greenhouse gas targets for the region if it were implemented. The other is for transit priority projects, as defined by SB 375, which also must be consistent with the SCS or ACS. The determination regarding whether a project is consistent with the SCS or APS depends on whether the project is a residential project under section 21159.28 or a TPP under section 21155. In either scenario, the role for both the MPO and the local governments will need to be identified.

Streamlined Review for Residential or Mixed-Use Projects Under the provisions of SB 375, an environmental impact report prepared for a residential or mixed-use project that is consistent with the general land use designation, density, building intensity, and applicable policies specified for the project area in either an SCS or APS is not required to discuss growth-inducing impacts, project-specific cumulative impacts from cars and light-duty truck trips on global warming, or a reduced residential density alternative to address the effects of car and light-duty truck trips generated by the project.)

The statute clearly defines the findings necessary to determine whether a project is afforded streamlined review. Specifically, the proposed project must be consistent with the general land use designation, density, building intensity, and applicable policies specified for the project area. Criteria for determining consistency likely would be fully described in the SCS. The role of the MPO in consistency determination will need to be explored.

SACOG is proposing, in coordination and parallel with the other three largest MPOs, to undertake three steps that would lead to the development of an RTP/SCS Program EIR (PEIR) to be used for CEQA tiering, which could potentially help local

agencies streamline their environmental assessments. SACOG will work with the other MPOs to agree on a common methodology for addressing these issues.
At a minimum, the PEIR would obviate the need for local project EIRs to analyze (a) growth inducing impacts, (b) impacts of cars and light-duty trucks on global warming, or (c) regional transportation impacts.

This work activity helps improve air quality by promoting infill and compact development that will receive more efficient CEQA clearance. The project will help increase housing affordability by reducing project environmental costs and thus housing sales prices. The activity will help developers of infill projects whose projects revitalize urban and community projects. The activity reduces automobile and fuel consumption, strengthens the economy and improves infrastructure by promoting efficient growth within the boundaries of the SCS.

Work Products and Indicators

1. A tiering instrument will be designed. SACOG will convene its local government partners and the development community to design an instrument that is objective and consistent with the SCS.
2. A toolkit will be developed with broad stakeholder engagement that helps developers identify standards for consistency, and when and how their projects can be streamlined. The process from the four largest MPOs will compare outcomes and shared their results across California.

Work Activity #5: Public Outreach & Visualization

The four major MPOs are focusing on public engagement and visualization in this program funding round. Visualization tools are critical to SACOG's public engagement and implementation activities for Blueprint, MTP and RUCS. During the Blueprint project, SACOG helped develop new techniques to analyze and quantify the connection between land use travel generation and detailed, micro-level land use characteristics (density, diversity, design, destination accessibility, demographics, distance to transit, et cetera; generically referred to as "the Ds"). SACOG staff used national research to account for how changes in the land use Ds impacted the need for auto trips. SACOG is currently assisting Caltrans in a project to further advance this research and assist our partner regions with a statewide tool to show how the Ds affect the need for auto travel.

This work activity will allow SACOG to share learnings from the creation of the new visualization tool, and the tool itself, with other regions. MPOs will be able to gather new input from new communities on how to meet the regional GHG targets established under SB 375 and potential federal laws. This effort will also provide practical tools to local agencies (cities, counties, transit agencies, etc.) for their general and specific smart-growth planning efforts. The resulting Ds analysis tool will be especially useful to mid-size and smaller MPOs and regional transportation planning agencies, which may lack the resources to develop more complex methods for integrated land use and transportation planning.

This work activity will also support SACOG's outreach and engagement activities with continuity of participation across the MTP process and help ensure that all participants understand the new elements associated with the SCS aligning the RHNP with the MTP. We will conduct public outreach efforts required for the SCS/MTP update and upgrade visualization techniques to increase access and understanding of the forecasting tools used for regional and statewide planning. Funding would support outreach for the final rounds of public information sessions and hearings in each county in the spring of 2011.

Work Products:

1. Develop an expanded open-source web-based interface for the direct application of Ds elasticities to changed micro-level land use files, with changes to key travel metrics based on the land use changes computed as a range of likely responses. Travel metrics include: VMT; vehicle trips; and transit and non-motorized trips. Land use/transportation dimensions include: density; diversity; design, and distance from transit
2. Public outreach for Updated MTP2035 including six county-scale information sessions and three public hearings.

Indicators:

This task will help jurisdictions continue to engage the public on growth in their communities by providing new tools that will promote understanding of Blueprint principles and how they relate to a range of regional and local objectives. These tools will help address issues pertaining to infill and compact development, reducing VMT, fuel use and emissions. Public support for these objectives will help reduce the amount of land that is developed and protect natural resources and agricultural lands.

Continued outreach via the MTP process and within local communities will help engage more members of the community thereby promoting equity.

Mandatory Application Requirements

Threshold Requirements

A. Consistency with State Planning Priorities

(1) Promote Infill development and invest in existing communities. All of the proposed work activities reinforce the Blueprint principles of more compact, urban development and protection of agricultural lands and open space. The fundamental argument for the RUCS project is that economically viable, sustainable rural areas will thwart encroachment of sprawl and encourage infill development.

(2) Protect, preserve and enhance environmental and agricultural lands and natural and recreational resources. As stated above, all of the proposed activities lead to strengthening the viability of rural lands in the Sacramento region. The Blueprint project focused on urban development in urban areas; the RUCS project focuses the rural areas of the region.

(3) Encourage location and resource efficient new development. The work activities related to RUCS will analyze different ways to ensure that rural areas are economically viable by examining location efficient jobs, housing, infrastructure and services.

SACOG currently has multiple efforts that coordinate well with state plans. The adopted MTP and MTP update tie in to the mobility needs of the California Transportation Plan and the link with air quality impacts for the State Implementation Plan and population projections that will inform the RNHP. The RUCS project examines land conservation and stewardship consistent with the California Wildlife Action Plan and the Natural Community Conservation Plan, and examines rural water resource issues of supply, demand and efficiency. The Blueprint project mapped all mining and resource lands of the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act. In August, SACOG formalized a partnership with the integrated water providers of the Sacramento region as part of its application to the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development's Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant program

B. Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emission consistent with the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006

Balanced land uses—where jobs, housing and services are in close proximity to one another—are the foundational basis for reducing VMT, and thus reduce greenhouse gases. The proposed work activities all promote the reduction of VMT by addressing the critical relationship between land use and transportation.

C. Meet the Collaboration Requirements of Focus Area #2

The work activities proposed here will be led by, and solely the responsibility of SACOG and its consultants to perform; therefore there are no Collaboration agreements required. However, these work activities benefit the 22 cities, six counties and the residents of the SACOG region. Certain activities also benefit other regions in the state. In the attachments are letters of support from region's county governments, as they have the largest geographic area of rural lands in the region.

Program Objectives

In the scope of work description, a number of indicators are described that address the Sustainable Communities Program Objectives. The following will have the most directly applicable indicators (the list of anticipated indicators is attached): promote public health; promote equity; increase housing affordability; protect natural resources and agriculture lands; reduce automobile usage and fuel consumption; improve infrastructure systems; and strengthen the economy.

Priority Considerations

Proposal demonstrates ongoing collaboration with state, regional and local, public and private stakeholders and community involvement

SACOG's implementation of the Blueprint has included a greenprint study, RUCS, involving stakeholders representing federal, state, regional and local, and public and private stakeholders in the rural and agricultural communities in three working groups: land use, transportation, and local markets. RUCS project collaboration includes: local governments, environmental planners and advocates, farm bureaus, chambers of commerce, environmental advocates, resource conservation districts, parks and recreation departments, building industry, reclamation districts, water resource agencies, and transportation planning agencies. Over the past two years,

SACOG has worked with stakeholders to identify opportunities for new policy and innovations to improve economic sustainability of productive open space surrounding the region's urban centers. The benefits of the project extend to natural resource preservation, open space and agricultural land preservation, VMT reduction, air quality and GHG improvements, as well as improving food access, public health and economic conditions for a major part of the Sacramento region's economy.

Proposal addresses climate change impacts

Products from this proposal are important tools that can be used to affect reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. By enhancing the viability of agriculture, these lands will be less likely to convert to development. SACOG analyzed and compared the carbon emissions between agricultural vehicles and vehicles in a typical residential development and found that development produces more than 300 times the annual carbon emissions of agriculture. Reducing the rate at which agricultural lands convert to urban development is an important strategy to reduce emissions. Because the SACOG region has large quantities of both urban and rural lands, this strategy will be important to support the MTP and SCS. This project will also address ways to better balance rural jobs and housing, which will reduce travel for agriculture workers and therefore emissions from long commutes. Furthermore, through strategies to improve food access, urban populations will travel shorter distances to purchase food, thereby producing fewer emissions. Finally, improving the efficiency of moving goods from farm to market and between the Sacramento and Bay Area regions is another important approach to curbing emissions.

Proposal demonstrates strategies or outcomes can serve as best practices

SACOG's work is setting the statewide standard for planning tools and analysis for urban and rural land use and economic development. The data and tools related to this proposal will be shared with SACOG's six counties and 22 cities, air quality management districts universities, as well as others outside the region. SACOG has been one of the leaders in advancing regional planning with the use of visualization tools in California. SACOG will develop a toolkit as part of the RUCS project, and products from this proposal will be added to that toolkit. That toolkit will be available electronically or in print. SACOG's online data center is an easily accessible repository that will host new data developed as part of this project. SACOG has been working with agricultural and rural advocacy groups throughout the RUCS project, and will continue to collaborate and build capacity among these groups.

Proposal is leveraged with additional resources

This grant request is for $750,000. The proposed scope of work directly augments three SACOG's largest, highest priority projects: RUCS, MTP2035 update, and Blueprint implementation. Those projects have a dedicated annual budget for the fiscal year 2010-11 of approximately $942,000, $2.1 million and $296,000, respectively, or a total of $3.34 million. In addition, SACOG submitted a $1.93 million application in August for the U.S. HUD's Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant program for activities that are directly complementary to the activities proposed here.

Proposal serves an economically disadvantaged community or severely economically disadvantaged community

Based on 2000 Census data, the region's block groups are defined in the disadvantaged or several disadvantaged category. Of the region's 695,000 households, this translates into 251,000 households in the disadvantaged category, and another 99,000 as severely disadvantaged. In addition, as mentioned earlier, public health services are also needed as the region has a 27.1 percent childhood obesity rate (Source: CDE 2008-2009 California Physical Fitness Report).

Organizational Capacity

SACOG is firmly committed to executing the proposed scope of work if awarded. All of the work activities relate to one of three core SACOG projects: RUCS, MTP2035 update, and Blueprint implementation. Each project has a project manager responsible for everything within that, and task leaders accountable to the project manager. In addition, the executive director is directly involved in all three projects and was the leader in identifying the need and scope for these activities. Each proposed work activity, upon funding, will be integrated in the respective broader project (RUCS, MTP or Blueprint). The timelines for each are reviewed by the SACOG Board of Directors, with regular, required briefings built into the timeline and scope of work.

SACOG will implement these work activities and involve the local government agencies and other stakeholders through well-established communication channels. SACOG directly maintains and updates its website, releases monthly newsletters, holds regular regional conferences and technical and policy workshops, and maintains a number of standing committees.